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Chair: Mr. Haniff ..... (Malaysia)
later: Ms. Critchlow (Vice-Chair) ..... (Guyana)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Agenda item 64: Report of the Human Rights Council (A/66/53 and A/66/335)

1. **Ms. Dupuy Lasserre** (President, Human Rights Council), introducing the report of the Human Rights Council on its sixteenth and seventeenth sessions and fourteenth to seventeenth special sessions (A/66/53), said that 2011 marked the fifth year since the establishment of the Human Rights Council. The Council had conducted a review of its functioning, and the report on its outcome had been adopted by the General Assembly.

2. As follow-up to the review of the Council's work, she had established a task force of members from its Bureau, the United Nations Office at Geneva and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), which would submit recommendations to the Council at its next session in March 2012. The Council was implementing the recommendations concerning the universal periodic review and the selection of the special procedures mandate holders, and would be holding its first annual high-level panel on human rights mainstreaming within the United Nations system at that session.

3. The review process had generated awareness of the importance of cross regional work and the use of different tools to foster country cooperation for a positive impact on the situation on the ground. Momentum had built towards a proactive review process that was based on consensus when possible, using the toolkit from the Council's institution-building package.

4. During the past year, the Council had demonstrated its ability to respond to human rights crises through special sessions on Côte d'Ivoire, Libya and the Syrian Arab Republic and the commissions of inquiry and fact-finding missions it had established to make recommendations relating to serious human rights violations. It had also increased its interaction with the High Commissioner for Human Rights through interactive dialogues on the basis of the High Commissioner's reports and on specific country situations in Côte d'Ivoire, Libya, the Syrian Arab Republic, Yemen and Belarus.

5. A new special procedures mandate had been established on the right of freedom of peaceful assembly and of association, and at its next session, the Council would hold panels and thematic discussions on issues including the protection of freedom of expression on the Internet, discriminatory laws and practices and acts of violence against individuals based on their sexual orientation and gender identity, and the administration of justice and technical cooperation.

6. Turning to the annual report, she noted that the Council had addressed a range of human rights issues and held various meetings and panel discussions on topics which included the rights of victims of terrorism, the human rights aspects of terrorist hostage taking, children working or living on the street, the human rights of people of African descent and the realization of the right to development. It had adopted a record of 35 resolutions, decisions and President's statements, and had launched a number of cross-regional initiatives. Five new special procedures had been established, bringing the total number of mandates to 44. The Council had enhanced its standard setting role by drawing on the work of its subsidiary bodies, and had submitted a draft declaration on human rights education and training and an optional protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on a communications procedure to the General Assembly for adoption.

7. The Working Group on the universal periodic review had concluded its review of all 193 Member States, including South Sudan, on 17 October. The Working Group's second cycle would be extended from four to four-and-a-half years, reviewing 14 instead of 16 countries in each session; the time available for each review would be extended from three to three and a half hours. Those adjustments would require some additional financial and human resources in terms of conference services. She called on States to provide previously requested resources or at least the minimum number of permanent posts for ensuring the timely translation of documents, and urged them to lend their support in addressing issues of great importance to the Council, particularly the establishment of fact-finding missions and commissions of inquiry, by working with their counterparts in the Fifth Committee.

8. **Ms. Nemroff** (United States of America) said that the Human Rights Council's accomplishments over the past year had been impressive. Highlights included its timely and decisive establishment of the mandate of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran and the commissions of inquiry for Libya and the Syrian Arab Republic, as

well as the resolution adopted by consensus to renew the mandate of the Independent Expert on the situation of human rights in Sudan, noting concern about the humanitarian situations in South Kordofan and Blue Nile. She also welcomed efforts to highlight abuses faced by lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender persons around the world, an issue which would require sustained attention by the Council, as well as its resolution adopted by consensus on combating intolerance, negative stereotyping and stigmatization of, and discrimination, incitement to violence and violence against, persons based on religion or belief.

9. Nevertheless, it was regrettable that the Council devoted a permanent agenda item to issues related to one country, Israel, that focus was disproportionate and diminished the Council's credibility and effectiveness.

10. She asked how the Council would address human right issues arising in the context of the Arab Spring and ensure that emerging democracies respected human rights during the transition period.

11. **Ms. Rasheed** (Observer for Palestine), recalling the suffering inflicted on the Palestinian people and damage to infrastructure as a result of the war waged on Gaza by the Israeli occupying forces in 2008 as well as the continuing blockade, asked what steps United Nations bodies such as the General Assembly, Human Rights Council, Secretary-General, or the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights could take to ensure that the perpetrators of those crimes, including war crimes, were brought to justice and the recommendations from the report of the fact-finding mission on the Gaza conflict were fully implemented given the difficulties the Security Council had been facing in discussing and taking action on that issue.

12. **Ms. Reckinger** (Observer for the European Union), welcoming the leading role the Council had played in responding to urgent country situations in recent months, asked how the Council could ensure swift and comprehensive follow-up to its special sessions. She would be interested to hear how the second cycle of the universal periodic review could contribute to effective follow-up on implementation of the recommendations from the first cycle. She would also like to know how the President planned to enhance awareness of the Council's work at Headquarters and what her expectations were for the panel discussion on human rights mainstreaming throughout the United Nations system planned for March 2012.

13. **Ms. Horsington** (Australia) urged all nations to build on the human rights dialogue by involving civil society in ongoing reforms, as the second cycle of the universal periodic review approached, and to adopt practical and sustainable responses to human rights situations worldwide. To that end, her Government continued to promote and fund practical initiatives to improve the observance of human rights, particularly in the Asia-Pacific region. She asked how the consideration of human rights could be further integrated into processes across the United Nations system, including at Headquarters.

14. **Mr. Kimura** (Japan) said that the Government of Japan welcomed the special sessions that the Council had convened in response to serious human rights violations and its urgent dispatch of international commissions of inquiry and adoption of resolutions which sent strong messages to the international community. He asked for an assessment of the review process and what the Council's next steps and priorities would be. While agreement had been reached at Headquarters on aligning the Council's work with its membership and reporting cycle, and on options for the implementation of urgent mandates, it was regrettable that no agreement had been reached on improving its election process or on strengthening implementation of the General Assembly resolution on the Council's funding.

15. **Mr. Hauri** (Switzerland) said that his Government appreciated the Council's promotion of a victim-based approach in addressing urgent matters. He asked what response could be given to those who claimed that the Council did not react adequately to situations of serious human rights violations, and how the Council could further strengthen its capacity to adapt in response to the surge in popular democratic uprisings in the world.

16. Noting his Government's commitment to the strengthening of the Council's work in human rights education and training, the promotion of truth, justice, reparations and guarantees of non-repetition, and the theme of human rights in the context of peaceful protests, he asked what areas the President wished to see strengthened.

17. In the light of the Secretary-General's welcome plans to increase the budget for activities related to human rights and the Council, sustainable solutions were needed for financing and implementation of

urgent measures in particular. A mechanism similar to the one available to the Secretary-General for unexpected and extraordinary expenses should be set up to address human rights matters. He asked what could be done to ensure that the Council and High Commissioner for Human Rights had the means to implement urgent measures.

18. Lastly, while the increased visibility of human rights within the United Nations system was welcome, the Council's membership must continue to strive for a strong, efficient and transparent institution. It was regrettable that the review of the Council had not enabled the present dialogue to be held in the plenary of the General Assembly.

19. **Mr. Frick** (Liechtenstein) welcomed the interactive discussion which had been the result of the review of the Council, and the clear division of labour established between the Third Committee and the plenary of the General Assembly in addressing the substance of the report and decisions of the Council. He hoped that the call to establish proper funding mechanisms in the General Assembly to account for urgent and unexpected expenses from Council mandates would be heeded when the Fifth Committee took up the matter.

20. He wished to know how the close cooperation and exchange of information between Geneva and New York could be continued, and what the President's priorities would be in the coming year.

21. His Government particularly welcomed the Council's work in standard-setting, for example through the draft optional protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The timely mandates created to address human rights emergencies and the successful completion of the first cycle of the universal periodic review demonstrated that the Council was fully operational in the range of activities under its mandate.

22. **Mr. De Léon Huerta** (Mexico) said that while his delegation welcomed the active role played by the Human Rights Council in the past year and the important decisions made for the promotion and protection of human rights, the Council's recent sessions had been marked by an increasing polarization in the positions of delegations. He asked what could be done to ensure constructive dialogue without confrontation in the Council. He also asked what measures could be implemented to tackle the increase in the Council's workload and what States could do to streamline initiatives presented for its consideration.

23. **Ms. Li** Xiaomei (China) said that her Government had always maintained that human rights issues should be resolved through dialogue and cooperation, without politicization, pressure or naming and shaming of other countries. She thus hoped that the Council would adopt an objective and non-selective approach in its work. In the light of the serious economic difficulties faced by developing countries, the Council should pay more attention to the realization of economic, social, and cultural rights and the right to development in order to foster their economic growth.

24. **Mr. Lukiyantsev** (Russian Federation) said that while the Human Rights Council must respond to human rights emergencies and challenges, equitable and mutually respectful dialogue between member States must also be ensured, and the misuse and politicization of the Council avoided. The outcome of the review of the Council reflected its importance within the United Nations system, and all States must implement the recommendations from that review. He asked for clarification on the objective and content of the draft resolution on the second cycle of the universal periodic review, which would be considered by the General Assembly.

25. **Ms. Bouhamidi** (Morocco), welcoming the interactive dialogue between the President of the Council and the Committee, asked how she viewed the role of national human rights institution within the Council and how the various panels established could contribute to the visibility of human rights issues within the Organization.

26. **Ms. Alsaleh** (Syrian Arab Republic) said that the targeting of certain countries in the Human Rights Council was part of a growing trend of double standards which ran counter to the Council's purpose and recommendations. She asked what mechanisms the Council could propose to address human rights issues in developed countries, such as racism, discrimination, issues affecting indigenous peoples and immigrants, the treatment of detainees and refugees and violations of the right to development through the use of unilateral economic sanctions against developing countries.

27. **Mr. de Antueno** (Argentina) said that his Government hoped that the interactive dialogue would

help to improve the Council's effectiveness and enhance the enjoyment of human rights in the world. In the view of his delegation, the Council's report should be considered in the General Assembly plenary, and its recommendations considered by the Third Committee. He asked what the President could do to enhance the Council's visibility, and whether her Office had the necessary resources to further disseminate its work.

28. **Mr. Errázuriz** (Chile) said that adjustments, including budgetary adjustments, needed to be made in the light of the volume of special sessions and missions of the Council in the context of the universal periodic review, to ensure efficiency in the presentation of country reports. It was also crucial to guarantee and maintain the independence of the special procedures in a manner that was non-discriminatory and with the appropriate level of urgency.

29. **Ms. Astiasarán Arias** (Cuba), noting that her Government had actively participated in the creation of the Council and in its review process, said that the recent establishment of an Independent expert on the promotion of a democratic and equitable international order was an important development. Her Government was concerned about the selectivity and double standards that had arisen in the consideration of human rights situations, emphasizing the importance of cooperation and respectful dialogue, and of considering human rights issues within the United Nations system in general on a universal and non-discriminatory basis. The sovereignty of States and rights of all peoples to choose their political and social system and their own institutions must be respected.

30. **Mr. Ulibarri** (Costa Rica) said that it would have been more appropriate for the General Assembly to hear the presentation of the President of the Human Rights Council first, leaving the Third Committee to deal with specific recommendations. He urged the Committee to adopt by consensus the draft resolutions on a declaration on human rights education and training, and on an optional protocol on the rights of the child.

31. **Ms. Simovich** (Israel) expressed her Government's satisfaction with the Council's response to grave human rights violations, such as the ongoing killing of civilians in the Syrian Arab Republic and the serious situations in Libya and Côte d'Ivoire. She asked what the Council could do to stop the ongoing deadly rocket attacks by Palestinians against Israel from Gaza.

32. **Ms. Dupuy Lasserre** (President, Human Rights Council), responding to comments and questions from the Committee, said that the Arab Spring and democratic transition of the affected countries was an opportunity for reflection on how to help those countries to strengthen their democratic institutions and the rule of law. The Council stood ready to support those efforts through its special procedures, including on the freedom of association and on the promotion of truth, justice, reparations and guarantees of non recurrence, in order to set out good practices and standards and help produce thematic and country-specific recommendations.

33. With respect to the Council's recommendations on the Gaza conflict, it was up to the Council and the delegations most directly involved to take action. The Council had submitted relevant recommendations to the General Assembly, and a number of other initiatives were in place within the United Nations to ensure accountability with respect to allegations of human rights violations.

34. With regard to the special sessions, there were plans to send investigative missions to Libya and the Syrian Arab Republic, if Syrian officials would cooperate, as access to the territory was currently being denied. Such missions were valuable and led to recommendations to help foster stability in those countries. The Council expected its recommendations from the first cycle of the review to be implemented by States, with support from civil society and the international community, including through special procedures and treaty bodies.

35. The United Nations as a whole must help to facilitate technical and financial support, including through the Office of the High Commissioner and the United Nations Development Programme clearing house mechanism. Agencies and potential donors should help to implement recommendations. Cooperation was needed, for example, to support the Independent expert on the situation of human rights in Haiti and ensure that human rights discourse was translated into action.

36. The Human Rights Council had been acting effectively and expeditiously, although there was always room for improvement. While technical cooperation could be provided in serious situations, States' own commitment to improving their human rights situation was essential. Cooperation also meant

refraining from hindering the Council's work. The intimidation of persons exercising their human right to freedom of expression or persons helping to improve the human rights situation in countries was unacceptable.

37. While awaiting the Secretary-General's recommendations on measures and resources to support urgent procedures, it was important to bear in mind that reviewing the Council's budget just once a year made it difficult to move funding from previously planned activities and to react effectively when emergency situations arose. The Council could not wait until the end of the year to implement relevant resolutions. No Council mandate or mission could receive extrabudgetary funding.

38. Regarding polarization and obstacles to constructive dialogue, she had always strived to ensure respectful dialogue, attaching importance to consensus, and she called on delegations to do likewise. It was hoped that consensus could be reached on the recommendations arising from the universal periodic review process in order to improve the work of the Council as well as its efforts on the ground. Mandate holders were bound by a code of conduct, respecting the principles of the United Nations Charter. They must engage in broad-based consultation to achieve consensus when addressing sensitive issues.

39. The main change between the first and second cycle of the universal periodic review was the increase in the meeting time from three to three and a half hours per country and in the sessions by one day, for a total cost of about $27,000 for interpretation services.

40. Ideally, countries should resolve their own human rights issues, but the world was not perfect and the universal periodic review was one means to address such situations. Some countries, including Somalia, Tunisia and Yemen, had come forward to request interactive dialogue or other constructive action from the Council, which was a positive sign. Member States not wishing to address specific human rights situations through Council resolutions had other means at their disposal for requesting assistance from the international community. Her appearance before the Committee was one way to increase the Council's visibility, as were the videoconferences it had been holding with various regional bodies, and its increase in video message broadcasting in general.

41. The Council considered all human rights to be interdependent and indivisible. It was hoped that those rights could be integrated not only into the United Nations system but into national development policies as well. It was up to the countries concerned to take the initiative and maintain open consultations prior to the consideration of draft resolutions within the Council.

42. As to whether the Council would consider the attacks on Israel from Gaza, its recent resolutions had included references to human rights violations from either side of the conflict, as it did whenever country situations — such as in Libya and Côte d'Ivoire — were considered.

43. *Ms. Critchlow (Vice-Chair), took the Chair.*

44. **Ms. Alsaleh** (Syrian Arab Republic) said that her delegation wished to hear the President's views on human rights violations in some developed countries. It was mystifying that the Israeli representative, whose remarks had consisted of lies, had neglected to mention that since its establishment, the Human Rights Council had held countless meetings and special sessions to address Israel's slaughter of Arab peoples. Despite the adoption by several United Nations bodies of tens of resolutions condemning the Israeli occupation, Israel persistently refused to abide by them and implement its commitments under international humanitarian and human rights law. As long as Israel continued to occupy Arab lands and commit sadistic violations of human rights, it had no moral standing to judge any human rights situation in the world.

45. Noting the country-specific resolutions targeting only certain countries, she enquired whether problematic human rights situations did not in fact affect every country. She also wondered what mechanisms the Council might propose to address the human rights violations taking place in developed countries, including discrimination, ill-treatment of detainees and refugees and violation of the right to development through unilateral sanctions against developing countries, to name a few.

46. **Ms. Dupuy Lasserre** (President, Human Rights Council) said that human rights violations committed in developed countries were also regarded thematically at each session of the Council, which could not, however, be expected to adopt resolutions on every country at every session. Rather, thought must be given to what the most efficient and effective use of time at a given session might be.

47. Far from considering human rights situations selectively, the Council was aware of situations in all countries and dealt with them on a case-by-case basis, helping countries reflect on how best to tackle their specific challenges. Situations did vary from country to country; for instance, developing countries, which had, on the whole, fewer resources to realize economic, social and cultural rights, might get a lower mark in that respect.

48. Any country participating in the universal periodic review had the opportunity to comment as part of the process. A politicized, accusatory tone did not help, given that there were problems to solve. It was also counterproductive that some countries, even within the universal periodic review, characterized all recommendations from developed countries as being politicized or interventionist. From an institutional standpoint, it would be preferable if countries regarded the review for what it was — a valuable process — regardless of what country had provided particular feedback. If a country under review considered that another country had adversely affected its human rights situation, the issue could be approached internally and in a constructive rather than politicized spirit.

49. **Mr. Sefue** (United Republic of Tanzania), speaking on behalf of the African Group, stressed that continued engagement with all stakeholders on the promotion and protection of human rights was key to arriving at an understanding on contentious issues and moving forward on matters that Member States agreed on. The Human Rights Council played a crucial role in the worldwide protection and mainstreaming of human rights. The African Group welcomed the consensus approach and outcome of recent negotiations on the review of the Council's work, as well as the coordination between the Geneva and New York offices during the review process. The new practice of holding an interactive dialogue between the Committee and the President of the Council would surely be beneficial for all involved. In that connection, the Group welcomed the presentation of the report of the Human Rights Council by its President before the General Assembly and the Committee, enabling those bodies to act on all of the Council's recommendations to the General Assembly. Suggestions on how unforeseen expenses arising from resolutions and decisions of the Council might be financed would be welcome.

50. **Mr. Mac-Donald** (Suriname), speaking on behalf of the Member States of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), took note of the report of the Human Rights Council and said that it was a matter of grave concern to the countries of the region when mandate holders exceeded their mandates. Mandate holders should carry out their activities in full respect of the Council's Code of Conduct and engage in constructive dialogue with Member States in the discharge of their mandates.

51. He was pleased to note the adoption by consensus of the outcome of the mandated review of the Council. As the majority of CARICOM countries were not represented in Geneva, the group had taken the opportunity during the discussions held in New York to contribute to the review exercise. CARICOM would continue to support the work of the Council to ensure that it took due account of the principles of universality, objectivity and non-selectivity and eliminated double standards as it considered human rights issues. Hailing the completion of the first cycle of the universal periodic review, in which all Member States had participated, he thanked all partners for the technical and financial assistance extended to CARICOM States, as small States, in preparing their national reports.

52. **Mr. Laro** (Nigeria) said that Nigeria's active engagement with the Human Rights Council stemmed from its respect as a democratic country for human rights and fundamental freedoms. Welcoming the Council's substantial efforts to achieve its mandate, including through its special procedures, he urged the Council to focus more on economic, social and cultural rights, thereby contributing to the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals. Nigeria commended the Council for completing the first cycle of the universal periodic review and for concluding the review of its work and functioning. Also worthy of note was the substantial increase in the number of standing invitations issued to special procedures and in ratifications of the core human rights instruments.

53. The active participation of non-governmental organizations in the activities of the Human Rights Council provided a direct outlet for popular voices and attested to the fact that people around the world expected the United Nations to protect their human rights and fundamental freedoms.

54. **Ms. Hernando** (Philippines), speaking on behalf of the member countries of the Platform on Human Rights Education and Training, said that since the Human Rights Council's 2007 adoption of resolution 6/10, which had launched the initiative on human rights education and training, the Platform had encouraged the active participation of States, Council mechanisms and all other relevant stakeholders. While various aspects of human rights education and training had been developed over the years, no single document had contained all the necessary principles and elements for those either engaged in or seeking such preparation. Though not legally binding, the United Nations Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training filled that gap. As the first reference document created by the Human Rights Council, the Declaration provided a clear definition of human rights education and training, its scope, principles and the different means to ensure its implementation, also paving the way for follow-up initiatives at all levels, including through international cooperation. The Platform hoped that the procedural resolution under agenda item 64, recommending adoption by the General Assembly of the Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training, would receive broad support.

55. **Ms. Velichko** (Belarus) said that 2011 marked the fifth anniversary of the United Nations Human Rights Council. In that short time its strengths and weaknesses had already become apparent and Belarus welcomed the outcome of the review of its work. During the process, the Council had managed to avoid a number of proposed reforms whose sole inspiration had been the political ambitions of certain countries. Belarus opposed any review of the Council's status, including the imposition of additional membership criteria, that undermined the principle of sovereign equality among Member States. It had supported the Council's establishment and, like the majority of Member States, had great hopes for the universal periodic review as an effective, comprehensive and trustworthy mechanism to ensure human rights compliance. Those hopes had largely been borne out. The fact that virtually every country, including Belarus, had passed through the review spoke for itself.

56. It must be noted, however, that the Council's practice of "rubber-stamping" country resolutions had led to a paradoxical situation where the results of reviews and the efforts made by Governments to comply with their recommendation had often been ignored in favour of the politicized evaluations being promoted by groups of countries. Such a practice established a dangerous precedent which threatened to devalue the universal periodic review as an effective process.

57. In the context of the report on the Council's work, her delegation wished to call attention to recent attempts by Western Governments to misrepresent the human rights situation in Belarus using the United Nations human rights mechanism. A particularly egregious example had been the push by the European Union to adopt an anti-Belarus resolution at the Council's seventeenth sessi in June 2011. Belarus categorically rejected any consideration by the Council of such a politicized resolution, which was little more than a compilation of biased and unsubstantiated conclusions drawn by the European Union with respect to the situation in her country. The absence of support for it among the majority of Council members was evidence that it could not be regarded as an accurate reflection of the international community's views. Attempts by Western countries to include the issue of Belarus on the Council's agenda, including through the establishment of special procedures to address it, went against the Council's Institutional Building package, which in 2007 had abolished the mandate of the Special Rapporteur for Belarus and had removed the so-called "Belarus question" from consideration.

58. Her country was meeting its human rights obligations and cooperating with the United Nations human rights machinery, including with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. The Government had welcomed a number of special procedures mandate holders, and in August 2011 had extended a personal invitation to the High Commissioner for Refugees to visit the country.

59. Selective country-specific evaluations motivated by political agendas had no place as part of the Council's working methods, particularly given the limited financial resources currently available to implement its decisions and resolutions. Resources should be allocated with the real needs and priorities of Member States in mind with respect to social and economic rights, including assistance to the most vulnerable members of society — women, children, the disabled and the victims of human trafficking.

60. The Council's work should be rid of double standards, disrespect for the principles of sovereign

equality and cultural diversity and the manipulation of human rights for ulterior purposes, all of which hindered genuine progress with respect to international cooperation on human rights.

61. **Ms. Salman** (Malaysia) said that while countries had shown great flexibility in arriving at a fruitful outcome of the Human Rights Council review process, some countries seemed keen to use the Council as a platform to impose their values on others. Reviewing the Human Rights Council should be a continuous effort. Noting the unfortunate trend of politicization of human rights, she stressed that civil and political rights could not be separated from economic, social and cultural rights. It was heartening that the first cycle of the universal periodic review process had concluded successfully, with near-universal participation. Although some recommendations genuinely aimed to improve a given country's human rights system, the recommendations made by allies of the country under review failed to add value to the review process. Moreover, the Voluntary Fund for Financial and Technical Assistance should be strengthened so as to ensure universal participation in the process.

62. Given the steady increase in the Council's workload, adequate resources must be secured to ensure its effective functioning. Special procedures mandate holders must be assessed further, as there were too many on thematic issues, some of which might be studied biennially instead of annually.

63. **Mr. Siahaan** (Indonesia) thanked all Member States for supporting his country's election to the Human Rights Council for the next three-year period. Indonesia would continue to engage constructively with the United Nations human rights machinery and to ensure that all human rights, including economic, social and cultural rights and the right to development, received equal emphasis in the Council's work. A strong proponent of the universal periodic review mechanism, which had just concluded its first cycle, Indonesia was currently preparing its report for the next cycle in an inclusive manner, involving all relevant stakeholders.

64. Special procedures mandate holders should fulfil their mandates in full compliance with the code of conduct, maintaining professionalism and building trust and closer cooperation with States. The notion set forth in the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action that the international community must treat human rights globally in a fair and equal manner should be reflected in their work. The Council should conduct an overall review of those mandates in order to avoid duplication of effort.

65. Indonesia remained deeply concerned by the continuing violations of human rights in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. His Government continued to support the Palestinian struggle and called on the occupying Power to comply fully with the recommendations contained in the Report of the United Nations Fact Finding Mission on the Gaza Conflict. He hoped that the Council would continue to strengthen the capacity of Member States to comply with their human rights obligations, based on the principles of cooperation and genuine dialogue.

66. **Ms. Bouhamidi** (Morocco) said that, over the past five years, the Human Rights Council had, slowly but surely, helped to create a new culture of active engagement in the protection of human rights. Morocco had been one of the founders of the Human Rights Council, and had been among the first countries to present its initial report in the first cycle of the universal periodic review. It had been an active participant in the review of the Council just completed, which had determined that no major institutional reforms were needed. The Council had demonstrated its ability to respond to emergencies; despite its limited membership, all countries were stakeholders in its work because of the universality of human rights.

67. Morocco had demonstrated its support for the Council through its contributions to the establishment of Council mechanisms and procedures and the preparation of the Declaration on Human Rights Education and Training. It had also contributed $500,000 to the Voluntary Fund for financing of technical assistance programmes to benefit the African countries. It maintained a constructive relationship with the Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances, which had visited Morocco in 2009, the first such visit in the Arab world. It had welcomed a visit by the Independent Expert in the field of cultural rights in September 2011; and had issued invitations to other special procedures.

68. Initiatives at the national level, however, would have the desired outcome only with collective support and sustained commitment by the international community. Only strengthened cooperation among United Nations bodies, Governments and civil society

through partnerships to build local capacity would enable them to meet the challenges of the promotion and protection of human rights.

69. **Ms. Alsaleh** (Syrian Arab Republic) said that her country supported the promotion of all human rights on an equal footing and without the politicization and double standards that led to squandered efforts within United Nations human rights mechanisms. Human rights violations in the occupied Syrian Golan and the Occupied Palestinian Territory were among the most important matters addressed in the report of the Human Rights Council. Over four decades since the Israeli occupation of the Syrian Golan, and despite the demands by the Council that Israel should implement all relevant resolutions, it continued to obstruct the work of United Nations fact-finding teams, while Israelis guilty of war crimes and crimes against humanity continued to boast openly of their crimes, committed with impunity.

70. It was unfortunate that some had succeeded in politicizing the work of the Human Rights Council, exploiting it in the service of their narrow political agendas. While resolutions were adopted condemning human rights violations in some countries, no mechanisms existed to deal with the sadistic human rights abuses committed in the developed world. It was also regrettable that the Council ignored the efforts made by the countries its resolutions targeted to respond to the legitimate demands of their peoples. The resolutions on the situation in her country were based on misleading media information and drafted in a language unprecedented in its hostility, reflecting a willingness to comply with the agendas of countries that were avowed enemies and calling into question the Council's credibility.

71. The current incidents in the Syrian Arab Republic were the result of criminal operations carried out by terrorist gangs, in violation of the rights of the nation and its citizens. An unprecedented number of falsehoods and inaccurate allegations were being reported by a media campaign supported by some Western States that wished to weaken her country, change its political stances, interfere in its domestic affairs and force through their schemes. Despite its difficult circumstances, the Syrian Government had recently prepared and presented its comprehensive periodic report on the human rights situation in the country. It had accepted 98 recommendations and was studying 26 others, attesting to its commitment to promoting human rights at the national level and to the work of the Council.

72. **Mr. Mahmoud** (Egypt) said that Egypt was currently undergoing a major historical transition, fuelled by its commitment to the principles of democracy, transparency, accountability and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. His Government pledged its support for the role of the Human Rights Council in defending human dignity, and its engagement with Council mechanisms in a spirit of cooperation, dialogue and mutual respect. The international community must work as one in dealing with human rights issues within a framework that promoted all rights equally; in that connection, Egypt looked forward to strengthening its efforts to promote the rights to development and food and to combating all forms of discrimination, in accordance with the Durban Declaration and Plan of Action and subsequent documents. Member States must also support the Council by, inter alia, cooperating with its fact-finding missions, especially in the case of peoples living under foreign occupation, and implementing its recommendations.

73. The adoption of the results of the Council's review process by a vote had undermined the aim of gathering universal support for its work. It was the international community's responsibility to ensure the transparency of the Council's work and, most importantly, to prevent it from becoming a political tool that served to entrench the guardianship of a select few countries over human rights issues or that enforced controversial notions with no basis in international humanitarian and human rights law.

74. **Ms. Boiko** (Ukraine) said that her country had always attached great importance to United Nations activities aimed at promoting and protecting human rights, particularly within the framework of the Human Rights Council. Noting with pleasure the progress in the work of the Council and the increase in the number of its resolutions adopted by consensus, she nevertheless pointed out the need for further development of preventive mechanisms.

75. Her delegation welcomed the enhanced transparency in the selection and appointment of special procedures mandate holders and in particular, the fact that national human rights institutions that abided by the Paris Principles could nominate candidates. Ukraine also stressed the importance of

allowing national human rights institutions to take the floor after the State under review at the adoption of the universal periodic review outcome by the Council plenary. Her delegation urged countries to honour their standing invitations to mandate holders, and to commit to report voluntarily on the implementation of the recommendations received in the review. In closing, she reiterated Ukraine's strong commitment to constructive engagement with the Council, bearing in mind its aspiration to renew its membership in 2018.

76. **Ms. Popovici** (Republic of Moldova) said that 2011 had been very important for the future work of the Council because of the intensive discussions regarding the review of its work. Securing adequate financing mechanisms, in particular for special procedures mandate holders, was one of the issues requiring the close attention of all Member States. Openness and cooperation between Governments and special procedures constituted a key element to build confidence with the final aim of improving human rights situations in all countries. In that connection, the Republic of Moldova had extended a standing invitation to United Nations special procedures.

77. During its universal periodic review, her Government had involved civil society and international partners in the evaluation and drafting of its report, in conformity with Council guidelines. The fact that her Government, ahead of the wider process of national consultation on the results of its review, had accepted the recommendations made and would be examining a number of them in a broader context indicated that the exercise had the potential to yield valuable solutions in terms of improving national human rights policies. The recommendations constituted a valuable basis for further amendments to her country's national action plan on human rights for 2011 to 2014. The Republic of Moldova had also pledged to submit a midterm progress report on its implementation of the recommendations to the Human Rights Committee.

78. She thanked those delegations that had taken part in her country's universal periodic review for their earnest efforts to understand its particularities in the area of human rights, which stemmed from the transitional nature of Moldova's economic and political model. Follow-up activities would be coordinated by the UNDP offices in Moldova, its regional centre in Bratislava and the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, under the auspices of the Government of Moldova. While inroads had yet to be made in such areas as judiciary reform and protecting human rights in the Transnistria region, which had been out of Government control for over two decades, significant reforms had already been carried out under the national action plan on human rights. Her country's close cooperation with European Union member States and institutions and its commitment to the core human rights treaties as a party to most of them would surely yield further progress.

The meeting rose at 12.55 p.m.

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Chair: Mr. Zelioli (Vice-Chair) ..... (Italy)

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In the absence of Mr. Haniff, Mr. Zelioli (Italy), Vice-Chair, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 3.05 p.m.

Agenda item 62: Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, questions relating to refugees, returnees and displaced persons and humanitarian questions (*continued*) (A/66/12 (Supp.) and Add.1 and A/66/321)

1. **Ms. Kolontai** (Belarus) said that her delegation had noted the growing role played by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), notably in emergency situations. She likewise welcomed the further enhancement of its response capabilities, in particular through the elaboration of a new system of strategic stock management.

2. She noted with satisfaction the inclusion in the High Commissioner's report of the issue of human trafficking and of UNHCR's deepening cooperation with other organizations, including the Inter-Agency Coordination Group against Trafficking in Persons (ICAT). She fully expected the Office to intensify its efforts in that direction, in line with of the United Nations Global Plan of Action to Combat Trafficking in Persons.

3. UNHCR should consider what concrete strategies could be developed to protect refugees from human trafficking, as well as from sexual and gender violence. The High Commissioner's report had highlighted the immediacy of those issues, particularly in conflict zones.

4. Her country welcomed its constructive cooperation with UNHCR at the national level, while noting that the full potential of such cooperation had not yet been realized. The entry into force in 2011 of a country agreement with UNHCR had established the necessary preconditions to enhance the effectiveness of that collaboration.

5. Priority should be given to the diversification and expansion of UNHCR's operational activities in Belarus with the aim of improving social protections, establishing a centralized transit system, perfecting an identification system for asylum-seekers and more effectively integrating refugees into local communities. A response was likewise anticipated to the proposal that UNHCR should make use of the International Training Center on Migration and Combating Trafficking in Human Beings (ITC) in Minsk by developing a specialized international training course highlighting core UNHCR activities relating to refugees, migration and statelessness.

6. The personal contribution of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Mr. Guterres, had been greatly appreciated and his visit to Belarus in 2010 had provided an important impetus to its evolving cooperation with UNHCR, which would continue to grow.

7. **Mr. Kamau** (Kenya) said that the number of displaced persons in the world had increased, owing in part to famine and conflict. His delegation joined the Secretary-General's call for the international community to resolve long-running conflicts and increase its efforts to address the needs of displaced populations.

8. Kenya had been a benevolent host to refugees from Somalia, the Sudan and other neighbouring countries for over twenty years. While most refugees from the Sudan had been repatriated since the restoration of peace in that country, the number of Somali refugees had been increasing owing to famine, drought and insecurity in their country. In fact, the third largest human settlement in Kenya was not a town or city, but a refugee camp hosting 600,000 mostly Somali refugees. The camp had been designed for only 90,000 people and the influx of people had overwhelmed the camp facilities and bled Kenya's capacity as a host country. Environmental degradation had devastated the surrounding area and competition for scarce resources had led to tensions with nearby communities. In addition, with armed groups taking advantage of the reigning lawlessness in Somalia, incidences of human trafficking, arms smuggling, abduction and kidnapping had spiked both inside and outside the refugee camps. Attacks on refugees and aid workers were also on the rise, while terror threats and attacks by Al-Shabaab militia groups were a major security concern throughout Kenya.

9. The international community, the United Nations and non-governmental organizations operating in Kenya must recognize the magnitude of the burden carried by the Kenyan Government and urgently explore new options to provide for international refugees. While his Government was committed to fulfilling its obligations to protect refugees, the

continued instability in Somalia made it increasingly difficult to provide for the security of Kenyans, refugees and humanitarian workers, and to ensure the protection of the environment.

10. The Government was taking medium- and long-term measures to address the situation. Given that it was an Al-Shabaab blockade against relief agencies that was causing many Somalis to migrate in search of humanitarian assistance, an initiative was under way to create safe zones within Somalia, in cooperation with the African Union, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development and the Somalia Transitional Federal Government. Relocating refugees to the safe zones would alleviate some of the congestion around the camps. In addition, Kenya had recently hosted a summit on the Horn of Africa crisis, which had produced a strategy setting out actions required by States in the region and other stakeholders to address the crisis. He urged the international community, including UNHCR and the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, to support the efforts to implement that strategy and to create safe zones in Somalia. Actions to address the root causes of the conflict in Somalia were also needed. Promoting regional peace and preventing conflict would stem the influx of new refugees and ensure the voluntary repatriation of existing refugees.

11. His delegation appreciated the solidarity shown by the international community towards the Horn of Africa. His Government looked forward to strengthening relationships with UNHCR and other agencies to promote peace and development in Kenya.

12. **Ms. Khanum** (Pakistan) said that her Government had been partnering with UNHCR since Afghan refugees had begun migrating to Pakistan 30 years ago. Since that time, the country had become host to the largest refugee population in the world, with negative effects on its economy, security and sociocultural situation, including a reduction in job prospects and stress on public infrastructure. The recent floods in the country and the global financial and food crises had compounded those challenges. Her Government had introduced several programmes to better meet the needs of Afghan immigrants and to respond to the impacts of that population on the environment and society. However, there was still a great need for the international community to redouble its efforts to address the situation of protracted refugees. The donor community and UNHCR should aim at accelerating reintegration, reconstruction and rehabilitation efforts in Afghanistan, which would enable Afghan refugees to return to their homeland. The international community should also share the responsibility for those refugees by increasing funding for relevant programmes in host countries and by offering the possibility of third-country resettlement. The fate of refugees, returnees and displaced persons must be recognized as a common responsibility. Strategies must be developed to protect them in ways that did not create new political, economic or social tensions among host communities.

13. **Ms. Bouhamidi** (Morocco) said that her delegation commended the efforts of UNHCR to diversify its partnerships with a view to increasing support for specific refugee populations. The past year had been marked by various natural and man-made crises, particularly in Africa, which had intensified the complex humanitarian challenges faced by UNHCR, with the number of displaced persons reaching its highest level in 15 years. New flows of forcibly displaced persons were exacerbating already difficult protracted refugee situations. Under such circumstances, respect for humanitarian law and the rights of refugees must be made a priority.

14. The implementation by UNHCR of global recommendations on voluntary return had led to the repatriation of a number of refugees in protracted situations. However, it was regrettable that UNHCR had not been able to consider the refugee camps in Tindouf, Algeria, within its road maps for concluding long-term refugee situations in various African countries. The host country had not allowed UNHCR to register the refugee population in Tindouf, despite the critical role of accurate surveys of refugees in determining their needs and facilitating their voluntary return. UNHCR must be allowed to act in accordance with its mandate, free from the imposition of any political or ideological barriers by host countries. To subject the eminently social mission of UNHCR to political conditionalities would only serve to perpetuate humanitarian tragedies within refugee camps, especially in Africa.

15. Her Government welcomed the resumption of family visits by air between refugees living in the Tindouf camps and their families in Western Sahara early that year, after months of suspension. The commitment by all parties to implement the

Confidence Building Measures programme was also a positive development.

16. The ministerial-level meeting to commemorate the 60th anniversary of the Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees should advocate a refugee protection system based on accurate registration. In addition, the international community should view the anniversary as the time to provide UNHCR with the resources it needed to fulfil its mission and to urge States parties to respect their obligations to refugees without delay.

17. **Mr. Šćepanović** (Montenegro) said that his Government had made the resolution of the status of refugees and displaced persons a key target in its progress towards European integration. A strategy and action plan covering the period 2012-2015 had been adopted, which provided a two-pronged solution to the situation: the integration of refugees into Montegrin society and their voluntary return to their countries of origin. The strategy had been drafted in collaboration with UNHCR and the European Union and placed a special emphasis on the Konik refugee camp, which had been highlighted as the most pressing refugee-related issue in the country in the European Commission Opinion on Montenegro's application for membership of the European Union. Integration of refugees was promoted by enabling their access to social protection, jobs and housing, in particular for Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian populations. Efforts to support voluntary repatriation would benefit from the recently signed bilateral agreements with Kosovo and coordination with municipal governments. Monitoring of the action plan, including data collection and analysis, would be conducted by a coordination committee. Resolving the legal status of refugees and displaced persons, with a view to improving their access to social services, had also been made a priority.

18. With regard to the nearly 14,000 displaced persons from Kosovo, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Croatia, the Government had granted them the status of foreign nationals with permanent residence and offered them free access to social protection services. Agreements had been reached among Montenegro and those three countries on issues such as data exchange, civil documentation and trust fund mechanisms. Recent multilateral meetings had resulted in a programme aimed at addressing the needs of the most vulnerable refugees in the Western Balkan region. Montenegro stood ready to find lasting solutions in cooperation with other States in the region. However, implementation of the regional programme would require support from the international and donor community.

19. **Mr. Starčević** (Serbia) said that the continued engagement of UNHCR and the personal efforts of the High Commissioner in dealing with the protracted refugee situation in South-East Europe were commendable. Serbia had been faced with a situation of internally displaced persons for nearly two decades. While his delegation recognized the need for cooperation between countries of origin and receiving countries, a lasting solution to the protracted refugee situation would not be possible without the involvement of international actors and the donor community.

20. In collaboration with UNHCR, the European Commission, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and the Council of Europe, Serbia had launched an initiative to find solutions for the refugees in the Western Balkans following the period of conflict from 1991 to 1995. That process had resulted in an agreement between Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Montenegro and Serbia on a regional programme to achieve durable solutions for the most vulnerable refugees and internally displaced persons. The programme aimed to end protracted displacement in the region through the provision of permanent housing and the closing of migrant centres, while fully respecting the right of every refugee to opt for voluntary return or local integration. The programme would be presented at the upcoming Ministerial Review Conference on Solving the Refugee Situation in the Western Balkans. A donor conference was also planned in 2012 to raise funds for national projects that were an integral component of the regional programme. Support from donors would be critical to implementing the project. A successful programme would provide a model for resolving protracted refugee crises in other parts of the world and would give new impetus to reconciliation in the region.

21. The 250,000 internally displaced persons who had been forced to leave the province of Kosovo and Metohija in 1999 continued to be denied return to their homes in the province owing to security concerns, legal and administrative obstacles, lack of progress in the reconstruction of housing and an extremely hostile environment. The socio-economic situation of internally displaced persons was also a pressing issue.

The Government of Serbia was fully aware of its responsibility to provide protection and assistance to that group and would continue to make efforts to fulfil its obligations, despite the current economic crisis. Noting that the province of Kosovo had been under United Nations interim administration since 1999, he called on all international parties in Kosovo to address the issue of internally displaced persons as an urgent matter. His delegation hoped that the UNHCR budget for operations in Kosovo would remain at existing levels.

22. He commended the helpful role UNHCR had played in resolving the situation in South-East Europe for some time, including its active engagement in preparing for the Ministerial Review Conference. However, as a humanitarian agency, UNHCR was not in a position to tackle the security situation and the issues related to the status of the province of Kosovo, in particular after the 2008 unilateral declaration of independence, which were the root causes of internal displacement in Serbia. His Government would continue to support UNHCR efforts to address complex situations of displacement.

23. **Mr. Mikec** (Croatia) said that his Government was fully engaged in efforts to ensure the protection of refugees and find solutions to their plight. A housing programme provided homes for returnees in need and funded the reconstruction and repossession of property damaged or occupied during the war. In addition, the deadline for submission of housing requests from returnees had been extended. His Government urged other countries in the region to implement similar national housing programmes.

24. His Government welcomed the regional programme agreed upon by Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Montenegro and Croatia, which focused on ensuring adequate housing for vulnerable refugees and had demonstrated the effectiveness of targeted regional collaboration in resolving refugee situations. Croatia was confident that the upcoming Ministerial Review Conference on Solving the Refugee Situation in the Western Balkans would establish concrete goals.

25. As a new member of the UNHCR Executive Committee, Croatia stood ready to vigorously uphold international standards and support refugee protection at all levels. Full respect for international principles, in particular non-refoulement guarantees and durable solutions, were of the utmost importance. The 60th anniversary of the Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees was an occasion to use the core legal values of the international protection of refugees as a basis for addressing new challenges, such as displacements caused by climate change and natural and man-made disasters. The upcoming ministerial-level meeting to commemorate the 60th anniversary of the Convention should agree on a way forward and on durable solutions for refugees and displaced persons.

26. **Mr. Nofukuka** (South Africa) welcomed the UNHCR internal reforms, which had facilitated the increase in resources for previously underfunded refugee programmes and the improvement of emergency response capacities. The increase in support for programmes in Africa was also welcome, in particular the resources allocated to respond to the current challenges in the Horn of Africa.

27. Noting that there had been an increase in the global number of refugees in 2010, he called on Governments to address the root causes of refugee situations. South Africa was committed to the protection of refugees and viewed migration as contributing to the economic, social and cultural development of the country. Poverty must be addressed by focusing on socio-economic development, in particular strategies to increase the development of human resources and reverse the "brain drain".

28. South Africa was one of the major destinations of asylum-seekers. However, many were in search of better economic prospects and did not fall into the asylum-seeker category. To better secure the rights of asylum-seekers and refugees, South Africa's laws on immigration had been amended to distinguish between economic migrants and genuine asylum-seekers. Cooperation at both the regional and bilateral level among States members of the Southern African Development Community needed to be strengthened in order to improve identification of asylum-seekers.

29. Given that all States faced the challenges posed by mixed migration, accurate migration data and improved data analysis were also needed to ensure the development of evidence-based policies. His Government stood ready to work with UNHCR in that regard. States should also strive to strengthen their legal framework and national capacity to ensure respect for the rights of all migrants. Lastly, the situation of people in protracted refugee situations was of particular concern. Multilateral action was needed to

address the root causes of such situations, including international intervention in conflict situations.

30. **Mr. Kim** Soo Gwon (Republic of Korea) said that the UNHCR reform process had enhanced its emergency response capacity. As noted in the UNHCR report, failure to respect the principle of non-refoulement was one of the greatest challenges to ensuring the protection of refugees. The reports of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea had noted that refugees from that country faced a risk of refoulement by several States in the region, an issue that was of particular concern to his delegation. His Government urged all Member States to respect their non-refoulement obligations. The Republic of Korea would be reaffirming its commitment to the cause of protecting and assisting refugees at the upcoming ministerial-level meeting to commemorate the 60th anniversary of the Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees.

31. **Mr. Borg** (Malta) said that the drought and famine in the Horn of Africa and the adverse effects of climate change had been increasing the number of refugees and displaced persons in the Mediterranean region and Malta had been among the countries with the highest number of asylum-seekers in 2011. The sinking of small boats crowded beyond capacity with illegal immigrants had become a too frequent occurrence in the Mediterranean, as human traffickers attempted to exploit asylum situations to the fullest. The influx of illegal immigrants also had a negative impact on transit countries, undermined national asylum policies and strained relations between States.

32. The recent popular uprisings in Tunisia, Egypt and Libya had generated a large increase in internally displaced persons and refugees seeking asylum in neighbouring countries. Malta had taken on a strategic role during the Arab Spring, serving as the logistical and transit base for evacuation operations. In addition, a humanitarian hub in Malta continued to coordinate relief services to Libya provided by international organizations, non-governmental organizations and individual States.

33. A European asylum support office had been opened in Malta that year in order to streamline the asylum policies of European Union Member States and improve cooperation between authorities. His own Government provided asylum to a disproportionately high number of applicants, given its geographic limitations and high population density.

34. Owing to the recent influx of immigrants from Libya to Malta, a 2010 pilot project to relocate refugees to other European Union countries had been extended. Another resettlement project in place since 2007 relocated beneficiaries of international protection to the United States. His Government was grateful to the participating countries and UNHCR for their assistance in those efforts. Beneficiaries of protection were also provided with a durable solution. UNHCR should encourage other Member States to help resettle refugees and displaced persons from Malta. The Governments of the countries of origin must also do more to improve their national situation.

35. **Ms. Tadesse** (Ethiopia) said that the emergence of complex and interconnected global challenges such as climate change and security threats had complicated the protection of refugees. In Africa, protracted wars, new conflicts and natural disasters had produced the largest number of refugees and internationally displaced persons in the world. International cooperation was critical to strengthening the capacity of UNHCR and host countries that were sharing their limited resources with people forced to leave their homelands.

36. The Government of Ethiopia had developed a legislative and management framework to ensure the protection of refugees. In addition, in collaboration with UNHCR, it had opened new refugee camps and had been working on a voluntary repatriation, reintegration and resettlement programme. However, the humanitarian crisis in Somalia had exacerbated the flow of refugees into the country, straining the limited capacity of the Government. The registration and screening process had been overwhelmed and shelter and basic services were at their limit. The arrival of children with acute malnutrition and the prevalence of communicable diseases among refugees had further aggravated the crisis. Her Government, together with humanitarian agencies, had focused relief efforts on assisting unaccompanied children, protecting refugees against sexual abuse and providing education to refugee children. In addition, enhanced health and nutrition interventions by UNHCR had reduced mortality rates in camps. She called on donors, humanitarian agencies and the international community at large to scale up their assistance both to meet the immediate needs of refugees and to tackle the long-

term, underlying problems that had left so many people in danger.

37. **Mr. Ilyassov** (Kazakhstan) said that the past decade had witnessed an increase in the scale, scope, and complexity of mixed migratory movements in Central Asia. Mass migration flows constituted a problem for Europe and America as well as for the countries of the region, and his Government considered regulation of migration a priority issue. Europe was experiencing the effects of recent disturbances in the Middle East and North Africa.

38. Migrants from neighbouring States constituted the main mixed flow into his country because of its status as a stable developing country. Kazakhstan therefore attached great importance to cooperation with the appropriate United Nations agencies. Under the 2011 Agreement on Cooperation with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), a Regional Conference on Refugee Protection and International Migration in Central Asia had been held on 15 and 16 March 2011 in Almaty. The Conference, which had a number of co-sponsors and participants, had enhanced understanding of mixed migratory movements. The resulting Almaty Declaration emphasized the importance of strengthening cooperation and of a differentiated approach to identify individuals who deserved international protection and assistance as well as those posing a threat to security. A regional framework structure would be established to unite the efforts of all stakeholders.

39. **Ms. Shiolashvili** (Georgia) said that one of the most appalling humanitarian issues of her country was the return of hundreds of thousands of Georgians who had been expelled from the Abkhazia and Tskhinvali regions in several waves of ethnic cleansing in the 1990s and after the 2008 war. The human rights of the few expellees who had returned to their homes were being violated. The right of return of internally displaced persons (IDPs) and refugees was being subverted by politically motivated obstructionism.

40. Her country attached great importance to UNHCR participation in the Geneva talks between Georgia and Russia concerning, among other issues, the security and safe return of IDPs and refugees to their homes in the occupied areas, and was concerned about the lack of progress due to the unconstructive Russian approach.

41. Her Government was committed to ensuring adequate living conditions for IDPs in Georgia, and was providing them with temporary housing and social services, as well as encouraging their social and economic reintegration through the IDP Community Development Project and its own State Strategy on IDPs.

42. **Mr. Sarabi** (Islamic Republic of Iran) said that a large number of refugees and displaced persons had been living in his country since the late 1970s. In 2011 the Government had conducted the seventh Refugee and Displaced Persons Census, updated data and issued new residence cards, and formulated plans for identifying vulnerable people.

43. Concerns about payment of health and medical costs of the refugees had led to implementation of the first phase of a comprehensive supplemental health insurance plan, to which UNHCR contributed. Expenditure by his country for the assistance provided to refugees far exceeded international and UNHCR assistance, which needed to be increased.

44. Most of the refugees came from Afghanistan, which needed assistance with achieving sustainable development that would allow the refugees to return home. His country believed that the repatriation budget would better encourage voluntary repatriation if it were spent on settlement and reintegration costs rather than on cash and in kind assistance. More international efforts and resources were needed.

45. With regard to paragraph 20 of the UNHCR report (A/66/12), his delegation believed that the causes of migration and asylum-seeking from the countries listed should not be specified unless they were substantiated.

46. **Mr. Elbahi** (Sudan) said that his country, a Party to the Convention relating to the status of refugees and its 1967 Protocol, had hosted a large number of refugees from neighbouring countries over several decades. Also during that period, natural disasters and internal conflicts in the Sudan had led to an increase in the numbers of Sudanese refugees fleeing to other countries in the region, placing an additional displacement-related burden on his country. Based on its conviction that the responsibility for refugee issues lay with States, the Sudan had enacted national legislation on displaced persons that enshrined the humanitarian commitments contained in the relevant regional and international instruments and in the

Comprehensive Peace Agreement. In order to address the root causes of displacement and refugee crises, the Sudan had also met all its commitments under the Comprehensive Peace Agreement, including acceptance of the results of the Southern Sudan Referendum. Moreover, his country's signing of the Doha Agreement for peace in Darfur had resulted in an improvement in the security situation, thus contributing to the return of refugees and displaced persons to their homes under voluntary return programmes.

47. Reiterating his Government's commitment to cooperating with all relevant United Nations agencies, especially UNHCR, he pointed out that the number of Sudanese who had crossed the border into Ethiopia because of the rebellion led by former Blue Nile governor Malik Agar in defiance of the provisions of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement on security arrangements, did not exceed a few thousand, contrary to what was stated in the report of the High Commissioner. In that connection, the Sudan was exerting great efforts to restore security to the Blue Nile and Kordofan regions and facilitate the return of refugees to their homes.

48. His country's cooperation with all relevant entities would take the form of active participation centred on the principle of burden-sharing, throughout the transition from the emergency relief stage to that of establishing development projects in affected regions. In closing, his delegation wished to remind the international community and donor countries of the necessity of providing support for voluntary return programmes targeting Sudanese refugees and internally displaced persons, and called on countries to abide by their commitments so that refugees could return home and enjoy stability.

49. **Ms. Boiko** (Ukraine) welcomed the structural and administrative reforms being undertaken by UNHCR and emphasized the importance of diversification of humanitarian funding resources.

50. She noted the approval in 2011 of the Concept of State Migration Policy and establishment of the State Migration Service. Since 2009 her Government had been implementing an action plan for integration of recognized refugees into the Ukrainian community. The recent adoption by the Ukrainian parliament of the law on refugees and persons in need of complementary or temporary protection was a major step towards developing an asylum system that met international standards and best practices of the European Union.

51. Her country appreciated the cooperation of the UNHCR Regional Office for Ukraine, Belarus and Moldova in providing assistance for immigrants and refugees seeking asylum, and its support in improving her country's legislation on protection of refugees' rights.

52. **Mr. Jafarov** (Azerbaijan) said that lack of agreement on political issues could not be used as a pretext for ignoring problems caused by continued and deliberate disregard for international humanitarian and human rights law in situations of armed conflict and military occupation. The occupation of almost one fifth of the territory of Azerbaijan by its neighbour Armenia had made one out of every nine persons in the country an internally displaced person or a refugee. Azerbaijan had one of the highest proportions of refugees and displaced persons in the world. His Government had made major efforts towards resolving their housing problems and including them in poverty reduction and economic development strategies and projects. Increased international awareness of the pertinent issues was necessary.

53. The rights of Azerbaijani citizens in Nagorno-Karabakh and surrounding districts had been violated by their expulsion. Despite international efforts, Armenia was continuing its policy of installing ethnic Armenian settlers in the occupied territories. Azerbaijan was committed to continuing its close collaboration with UNHCR to overcome the related challenges.

54. **Mr. Momen** (Bangladesh) noted that the report used the terms "people of concern", "persons of concern" and "populations of concern" and suggested that one term be chosen and used consistently. His country appreciated the reduction since 2010 of the number of such persons in the world, and hoped that UNHCR would be able to address the new challenges resulting from international conflict and the frequency and magnitude of natural disasters.

55. For more than two decades, Bangladesh had been hosting Myanmar refugees, a situation that had been given priority under the Global Plan of Action for 2009-2011 launched by UNHCR in 2008. Several hundred thousand people had crossed the border illegally in recent years. Most of the registered refugees who had entered in 1991 had voluntarily

returned to their homeland, but there had been no repatriations since 2005.

56. His country saw little benefit in piecemeal, sporadic resettlement; it called for a regional approach and resumption of repatriation activity. It welcomed the 2011 agreement by Myanmar to repatriate previously cleared Myanmar refugees after further verification.

57. **Mr. Dorbes** (International Committee of the Red Cross — ICRC) said that the focus should be on preventing the circumstances and events that caused people to flee their homes. The combination of violence and natural disasters often left communities totally unable to cope. Emergency assistance had to go hand in hand with helping people regain their self-sufficiency.

58. Between January and May 2011, ICRC had provided relief to 2.85 million displaced persons from 30 countries. Its situation assessments and operating responses combined various modes of action aimed at persuading authorities and other stakeholders to meet their assistance obligations, as well as distributing direct assistance and strengthening the self-protection ability of displaced groups.

59. State authorities and non-State actors needed to support the provision of assistance and protection by humanitarian organizations such as ICRC, and had to address the consequences and the root causes of displacement. Greater respect for international humanitarian law would reduce the need for humanitarian response and permit a scaling-back of demand for assistance.

60. **Ms. Cooper** (International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies — IFRC) said that numerous factors were driving migration within and beyond State borders, and that vulnerable migrants came from a variety of backgrounds and locations and were on the move for an increasing number of reasons. The Federation focused on individual needs, vulnerabilities, and potential of all migrants. It urged States to respect migrants' human rights and to commit to actions that would improve the migratory journey for the increasing numbers of people on the move.

61. The Federation was planning its 31st international conference to be held in Geneva in November 2011, which would bring together IFRC, ICRC, representatives of the national societies, and the 194 States parties to the Geneva Conventions. A draft resolution on practical objectives relating to migration had been prepared for submission to the Conference.

62. **Ms. Klein Solomon** (International Organization for Migration — IOM) mentioned the increased cooperation and collaboration between UNHCR and IOM in working with Governments concerned on assistance in migration and mobility situations. One example was the assistance recently provided to more than 200,000 migrant workers from 54 countries fleeing Libya.

63. Because of the multidimensionality of current movements of people, mixed migration flows continued to be a major shared concern. The collaboration of UNHCR and IOM was essential in order to provide effective support to Governments and protect migrants.

64. Climate change and environment degradation and their impact, extreme political events, and other challenges were forcing more persons into migration, and were of critical concern to both agencies, which were working together on refugee protection (UNHCR) and resettlement operations (IOM). Both the UNHCR High Commissioner and the Director General of IOM had called for increasing the number of resettlement slots and locations, especially in view of decreasing possibilities for return of refugees.

65. **Ms. Freimane-Deksne** (Latvia), speaking in exercise of the right of reply to statements made on 1 November 2011 by the representative of the Russian Federation in respect of agenda item 62, said that his reference to her country in the context of statelessness constituted deliberate misinformation. Latvia was a party to the Convention relating to the Status of Stateless Persons and the Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness, and national legislation had been brought into conformity with both instruments. Currently there were 177 stateless persons residing in Latvia. Although her country was not a successor State to the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR), it had granted privileged status and preferential access to the naturalization process and citizenship to former USSR citizens living in Latvia. Her country was committed to continuously improving human rights and guarantees and protecting the human rights of all its inhabitants, irrespective of their legal status.

66. **Ms. Kocharyan** (Armenia), speaking in exercise of the right of reply to the statement by the

representative of Azerbaijan containing several references to her country, regretted the continuing attempts by Azerbaijan to use every agenda item for its anti-Armenian propaganda. Its distortions were attempts to juggle with statistical data contained in reports by relevant international institutions, including UNHCR, and constituted yet another propagandistic attempt to blame Armenia for non-existent problems. She wondered why a country so rich in oil and foreign investment could not resolve the problem of IDPs and refugees, or at least improve their poor living conditions. Apparently the Government of Azerbaijan was not interested in resolving the refugee issue; otherwise, a solution would have been found. Azerbaijan was using the refugees as instruments to bring political pressure to bear on international bodies mediating the continuing conflict.

67. Concerning the reference to settlement of Armenians in Nagorno-Karabakh, their return to their homes did not violate any norms of international law. Armenia had been the first East European country to face the refugee problem after the massacres in Azerbaijan from 1988 to 1990 had forced the flight of half a million Armenians from that country.

68. Her country had no oil fields, and its financial resources could not be compared with those of Azerbaijan. It had nevertheless implemented programmes to rehabilitate refugees and IDPs and integrate them into its society. It looked forward to an end to the unnecessary propagandistic attacks by Azerbaijan, and hoped that that country would instead concentrate on trying to make life easier for the refugees until a definitive solution to the problem could be found.

69. **Mr. Goltyaev** (Russian Federation), speaking in exercise of the right of reply to statements previously made by the representatives of Latvia and Estonia, said that the information furnished by his country had been based on independent reports indicating that stateless persons in Latvia and Estonia continued to be the victims of discrimination and violation of their rights.

70. **Mr. Jafarov** (Azerbaijan), speaking in exercise of the right of reply to the statements made by the Armenian delegation, said that the expulsion of Azerbaijanis from the occupied territories was a confirmed fact. The rights of internally displaced Azerbaijanis to non-discriminatory treatment had been violated by Armenia. The aim of the military conflict in the territory had been the creation of a mono-ethnic culture by means of expulsion of the indigenous ethnic Azerbaijani population and refusal to permit their return, and the demographic changes reflected these discriminatory actions. Armenia's direct and indirect actions in occupied Nagorno-Karabakh and other occupied regions and surrounding areas, all recognized as subject to Azerbaijani sovereignty, were in breach of international law.

71. The attention of the Committee was also drawn to the fact that the Government of Azerbaijan had used its oil revenues to alleviate the problems of the IDP and refugee population. Armenia needed to realize that a prompt end to its illegal occupation of the territory of neighbouring nations was the only route to lasting peace and stability.

The meeting rose at 5.40 p.m.

United Nations A/C.3/66/SR.41

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Held at Headquarters, New York, on Thursday, 3 November 2011, at 3 p.m.

Chair: Mr. Haniff ..... (Malaysia)

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(a) Advancement of women (*continued*)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.10 p.m.

Agenda item 62: Report of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, questions relating to refugees, returnees and displaced persons and humanitarian questions (*continued*) (A/C.3/66/L.63)

Draft resolution A/C.3/66/L.63: Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

1. **Mr. Rasmussen** (Denmark), introducing draft resolution A/C.3/66/L.63, said that for the past 10 years the Nordic countries had coordinated the draft resolution and had focused on essential policy elements, using agreed text and limiting changes to the addition of certain issues that deserved special attention.

2. The draft resolution highlighted the commemoration of the sixtieth anniversary of the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and the fiftieth anniversary of the 1961 Convention on the Reduction of Statelessness. In addition, some new text drew attention to the series of regional dialogues with refugee women and girls undertaken by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees to highlight the importance of pursuing work on their protection, and also commended the High Commissioner and the States for launching the Global Resettlement Solidarity Initiative during the crisis in Libya in April.

3. **Mr. Gustafik** (Secretary of the Committee) said that Austria, Belarus, Burkina Faso, Burundi, the Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Ethiopia, Israel, Kyrgyzstan, Monaco, Portugal, Romania, Thailand and the United Republic of Tanzania had joined the sponsors.

Agenda item 69: Promotion and protection of human rights (*continued*)

(b) Promotion and protection of human rights: Human rights questions, including alternative approaches for improving the effective enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms (*continued*) (A/C.3/66/L.32, L.33, L.34, L.35, L.36, L.40 and L.42)

Draft resolution A/C.3/66/L.32: Enhancement of international cooperation in the field of human rights

4. **Ms. Astiasarán Arias** (Cuba), speaking as coordinator of the working group on human rights of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, said that the draft resolution was presented on an annual basis and its purpose was to recognize that the strengthening of international cooperation in the sphere of human rights was essential to achieve fully the objectives of the United Nations, including the promotion and protection of all the human rights.

5. The modifications introduced addressed technical innovations above all, but a special reference had been made to the recently adopted political declaration to commemorate the tenth anniversary of the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action.

Draft resolution A/C.3/66/L.33: Promotion of equitable geographical distribution in the membership of the human rights treaty bodies

6. **Ms. Astiasarán Arias** (Cuba), speaking as coordinator of the working group on human rights of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, said that the draft resolution affirmed the importance of continuing efforts to reduce the imbalance in the actual composition of the members of several treaty bodies, which tended to be detrimental to the election of experts from some regional groups. The current draft resolution requested the Secretary-General to submit a comprehensive report on its implementation.

7. **Mr. Gustafik** (Secretary of the Committee) said that the United Republic of Tanzania had joined the sponsors.

Draft resolution A/C.3/66/L.34: Human rights and cultural diversity

8. **Ms. Astiasarán Arias** (Cuba), speaking as coordinator of the working group on human rights of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, said that the purpose of the draft resolution was to recognize that all cultures and civilizations contributed to the mutual enrichment of the cultural life of mankind and to acknowledge the importance of respect and understanding for religious and cultural diversity.

9. The text had been updated slightly, stressing the important contribution of culture to development and the achievement of national development objectives and internationally-agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals.

10. **Mr. Gustafik** (Secretary of the Committee) said that the United Republic of Tanzania had joined the sponsors.

Draft resolution A/C.3/66/L.35: The right to development

11. **Ms. Astiasarán Arias** (Cuba), speaking as coordinator of the working group on human rights of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, said that the current draft resolution underscored the events held to commemorate the twenty-fifth anniversary of the Declaration on the Right to Development and endorsed the conclusions and recommendations of the Working Group on the Right to Development of the Human Rights Council at its eleventh session.

Draft resolution A/C.3/66/L.36: Human rights and unilateral coercive measures

12. **Ms. Astiasarán Arias** (Cuba), speaking as coordinator of the working group on human rights of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, said that, on numerous occasions, the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries had stated its opposition to coercive measures used as tools to exert political and economic pressure against any country, and particularly developing countries. It had also indicated that, under no circumstances, could a country be deprived of its means of development and subsistence.

13. The draft resolution reaffirmed that States must abstain from adopting unilateral coercive measures contrary to international law and the Charter of the United Nations. The changes introduced in the current version included technical innovations and reference to the elderly and persons with disabilities.

Draft resolution A/C.3/66/L.40: International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance

14. **Mr. Cabouat** (France), introducing draft resolution A/C.3/66/L.40 on behalf of the main sponsors, Argentina, France and Morocco, said that Bulgaria, Croatia, Cuba, the Czech Republic, Ethiopia, the Netherlands, Panama, Slovakia, Swaziland, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of) had joined the sponsors.

15. The International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance had entered into force on 23 December 2010 following ratification by the twentieth State, significantly extending the protection offered to victims. The Convention had now been signed by 90 States and 30 States had become parties to it.

16. He commended the Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances on the assistance it had been providing for almost 30 years to the families of victims in order to elucidate cases of enforced disappearance.

17. **Mr. Gustafik** (Secretary of the Committee) said that Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Costa Rica, Côte d'Ivoire, Ecuador, Eritrea, Iceland, Kazakhstan, Mongolia and the Republic of Moldova had also joined the sponsors.

Draft resolution A/C.3/66/L.42: Subregional Centre for Human Rights and Democracy in Central Africa

18. **Ms. Muhimpundu** (Burundi) said that Algeria, Angola, Chile, the Democratic Republic of the Congo Ethiopia, Ghana, Madagascar, Nigeria, Rwanda, Sao Tome and Principe and Togo had joined the sponsors.

19. The aim of the draft resolution was to ensure that the Centre could continue to support member States achieve greater promotion and protection of human rights and democracy. The Centre was mandated to reinforce the relevant national institutions and had also contributed to the establishment of transitional justice mechanisms in the countries of the subregion affected by conflict. The current version of the draft resolution had been revised to reflect recent events.

20. **Mr. Gustafik** (Secretary of the Committee) said that Burkina Faso, Chad, the Comoros, Eritrea, Morocco, the Niger, the United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe had joined the sponsors.

(c) Promotion and protection of human rights: Human rights situations and reports of special rapporteurs and representatives (*continued*) (A/C.3/66/L.54, L.55 and L.56)

Draft resolution A/C.3/66/L.54: Situation of human rights in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea

21. **Mr. Herczyński** (Poland), introducing the draft resolution on behalf of the main sponsors, the European Union and Japan, said that Palau had also joined the sponsors.

22. The General Assembly had adopted resolutions on the situation of human rights in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea driven by a shared concern about the grave, widespread and systematic human

rights abuses documented in the reports of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the country, as well as in the reports of the Secretary-General.

23. The text took into account some positive steps registered during the past year, including some cooperation with United Nations agencies in conducting a rapid food security assessment in the country. Nevertheless, the positive developments were few, and substantive changes on the ground were needed.

24. The sponsors of the resolution had informed the delegation of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea about the draft, but as in previous years, the delegation had refused to engage in discussions. They hoped that the text reflected the concerns of all parties who were genuinely interested in giving voice to the concerns of the people of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and that it would be adopted with the broadest support.

25. Lastly, some minor editorial changes were required. In subparagraph (a) (viii) of the first operational paragraph, the word "on" should be inserted after the word "especially", and in the sixth line of subparagraph (h) of the fifth operational paragraph, the word "and" should be deleted.

Draft resolution A/C.3/66/L.55: Situation of human rights in Myanmar

26. **Mr. Herczyński** (Poland), introducing the draft resolution on behalf of the European Union, said that Liechtenstein had joined the sponsors.

27. For a number of years, the General Assembly had adopted resolutions on the situation of human rights in Myanmar, reflecting the serious concern of the international community with the situation in the country. However, over the past few months some important steps had been taken by the Government towards national reconciliation.

28. The draft text was based on the reports to the General Assembly by the Secretary-General, as well as those of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Myanmar and reflected the positive steps taken by the Government, as well as the commitments made. It also addressed the continuing concerns with regard to the situation of human rights in the country, including those of ethnic minorities, and urged the Government to address the issue of justice and accountability as a central element of national reconciliation and the transition to democracy.

29. The sponsors preferred a consensus approach and had drafted the text with that in mind. Discussions had been held with the country concerned during the drafting process.

30. Some minor editorial changes should be made. In the third line of the sixth preambular paragraph a comma should be added after the words "including prisoners". In the first line of paragraph 8, the word "Notes" should be amended to "Noting" and, in the second line, the word "and" should be deleted after the comma. In the second line of paragraph 9, the word "and" should be added after the comma, and in the fifth line, the words "and further" should be added after the comma.

Draft resolution A/C.3/66/L.56: Situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran

31. **Mr. Rishchynski** (Canada), introducing the draft resolution on behalf of the main sponsors, said that Andorra had become a sponsor.

32. The draft resolution had been prepared carefully to ensure accuracy and to reflect the findings of the Secretary-General's report (A/65/361) and the report of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran (A/66/374). Concerns raised in past resolutions remained unaddressed; thus the situation called for continued international attention. The draft resolution called on Iran to address the concerns and to fully respect its human rights obligations in law and in practice.

33. As the only United Nations body with universal membership responsible for addressing international human rights issues, the Third Committee must live up to its responsibilities. Having requested a report from the Secretary-General, it must now consider it and take action. The sponsors hoped that other delegations would join them in supporting the draft resolution.

Statements made in exercise of the right of reply

34. **Mr. Jang** Il Hun (Democratic People's Republic of Korea) said that his delegation categorically rejected draft resolution A/C.3/66/L.54, which was nothing more than a political strategy aimed at isolating and stifling the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

The European Union should ponder the merits of tabling the draft resolution.

35. When the resolution was first adopted in the former Commission on Human Rights in 2003, the traditional practice of prior notification to and negotiation with the concerned country was completely ignored. The whole process of submission and adoption of the draft resolution clearly showed that it pursued ulterior political purposes.

36. No country could claim to have a perfect record on human rights issues and most of the human rights violations debated by the Committee, such as discrimination and violence against women and children or freedom of expression and opinion, had no relevance to the reality in his country. The main sponsors of the draft resolution should reflect on the human rights record of their own countries, where social evils and violations were prevalent, and take measures to address them before criticizing other countries.

37. The universal periodic review mechanism of the Human Rights Council, which treated the human rights situations of all countries on an equal footing, was now in full operation. The adoption of country-specific resolutions was therefore an anachronism, and an abuse of human rights that ran counter to the spirit and purpose of the United Nations Charter.

38. The Democratic People's Republic of Korea would not give in to such pressure and confrontation and would firmly defend and safeguard the socialist system chosen by its people, because it guaranteed full enjoyment of their human rights and fundamental freedoms.

39. **Mr. Mohammad Pour Ferami** (Islamic Republic of Iran) said that the purpose of the draft resolution introduced by Canada on the situation of human rights in Iran was certainly not for the promotion and protection of human rights in his country, but rather it was a politically-motivated attack on the Government and people of Iran.

40. The crucial point was that, if Canada was really concerned about human rights situations, the draft resolution was not the way to proceed. He was not trying to counter Canada's unsubstantiated allegations by launching a counter-accusation, but he reminded the Committee of the concerns raised by the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination about the situation of minority groups in that country, and the serious concerns expressed to the Human Rights Council by the Independent Expert on minority issues regarding the systematic use of racial profiling, and excessive use of force leading to the death of young black males, in particular.

41. His delegation believed that the right way to proceed lay in the sincere willingness and determination of the countries concerned to work together and create a favourable environment based on common understanding and respect for the promotion of human rights at all levels. His country strongly believed that "name and shame" tactics, the adoption of country-specific resolutions, and the manipulation of the United Nations human rights mechanisms would not lead to mutually acceptable results.

42. His delegation strongly advised the main sponsors of the resolution to rectify their own human rights records and requested all delegations to consider the politicized nature of the draft resolution and reject the attempt to impair the credibility and integrity of the human rights mechanisms.

Agenda item 28: Advancement of women (*continued*)

(a) Advancement of women (*continued*) (A/C.3/66/L.21)

Draft resolution A/C.3/66/L.21: Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

43. **The Chair** said he had been advised that the draft resolution contained no programme budget implications.

44. **Ms. Leveaux** (Sweden) said that Armenia, Colombia, Côte d'Ivoire, Ecuador, Egypt, Lebanon, Mali, Rwanda, San Marino, Thailand and Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of) had joined the sponsors of the draft resolution.

45. **Mr. Gustafik** (Secretary of the Committee) said that Antigua and Barbuda Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belize, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, the Comoros, El Salvador, Eritrea, Guyana, Haiti, Honduras, Jamaica, Kyrgyzstan, Madagascar, Malawi, Mali, Mongolia, Morocco, Namibia, Nicaragua, the Niger, the Philippines, South Africa, Suriname, Timor-Leste, Togo, Tunisia and Uzbekistan had joined the sponsors.

46. *Draft resolution A/C.3/66/L.21 was adopted.*

47. **Ms. Phipps** (United States of America), speaking in explanation of position, said that the Obama administration was a strong supporter of the Convention and was committed to its ratification by the United States of America. However, her delegation wished to note that, by joining consensus on the resolution, which welcomed the reports of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women on five of its sessions, her Government was not indicating its agreement with the entire contents of those reports. While it concurred with much that was said in the reports, there were aspects with which it did not agree.

48. Despite the foregoing, the United States of America was a strong supporter of the goals and purposes of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women as well as of the United Nations, in general, in promoting the human rights of women around the world.

The meeting rose at 4.15 p.m.